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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/764,978	01/23/2004	Plamen Denchev	205502-9037	9303

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EXAMINER

HWU, JUNE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1661

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/764,978	Applicant(s) DENCHEV ET AL.	
	Examiner June Hwu	Art Unit 1661	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5-10,13,14,16-23,27,28,33,34,36-43 and 50-60 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5-10,13,14,16-23,27,28,33,34,36-43 and 50-60 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/29/07</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendment to the claims filed on June 4, 2007 is acknowledged and entered.
2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in the prior Office action.

Status of the Claims

3. Claims 2-4, 11-12, 15, 24-26, 29-32, 35, and 44-49 are cancelled and claims 1, 5-10, 13, 14, 16-23, 27, 28, 33-34, 36-43, and 50-60 will be examined on the merits.
4. The rejection of claims 5, 18, 20, 21, 27, 38, 41 and 42 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention is withdrawn due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.
5. The rejection of claims 1, 5-10, 12-14, 18-23, 27-30, 32-34, 38-41, and 44-45 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pullman et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,492,174) in view of Handley et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,491,090) is withdrawn due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.
6. The rejection of claims 4 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pullman et al in view of Handley et al as applied to claims 1, 5-10, 12-14, 18-23, 27-30, 32-34, 38-41, and 44-45 above, and further in view of Schuller et al (Plant Cell Reports (1993) 12:199-202) is withdrawn due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.
7. The rejection of claims 16, 17, 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pullman et al in view of Handley et al as applied to claims 1, 5-10, 12-14, 18-23, 27-30, 32-34, 38-41, and 44-45 above, and further in view of Coke (U.S. Patent No. 5,534,433) is withdrawn due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.

Objections to the Claims

8. Claim 10 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Claim 10 is drawn to a method of reproducing coniferous somatic embryos, wherein the somatic embryos is selected from *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. Parent claim 8 is drawn to a method of reproducing coniferous somatic embryos, wherein the somatic embryos is selected from the genera *Pinus* and *Picea*. Thus claim 10 is not properly dependent upon claim 8. *Pseudotsuga* is neither a *Pinus* nor a *Picea*.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. Claims 1, 5-10, 12-14, 18-23, 27, 28, 33-34, and 36-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Attree (U.S. Patent No. 6,627,441) in view of Handley et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,491,090). The rejection is modified from the rejection set forth in the Office action mailed March 5, 2007, due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.

The claims are drawn to a method of reproducing coniferous somatic embryos are selected from the *Pinus taeda* or hybrid thereof and *Picea* comprising growing an embryogenic culture derived from an explant on a nutrient medium selected from the group consisting of induction, maintenance, or prematuration media, wherein the nutrient medium comprises of lactose which is more than 1.0% and less than 6.0% of the medium and an additional sugar selected from the group consisting of sucrose, glucose or fructose. The nutrient medium further comprises of less auxin, less cytokinin and abscisic acid (ABA) in the prematuration medium

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wherein the medium could be gelled or liquid. The induction medium is used to induce embryogenic tissue, the prematuration medium is used to grow and maintain embryogenic culture and the maturation medium is used to prepare the embryogenic culture for transfer to maturation medium and development of cotyledon stage embryos suitable for germination.

Attree teach a method of producing mature somatic embryos in all conifers including *Pinus taeda*, *Picea glauca* (white spruce) and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir) (col. 19, lines 1-2). Attree teach that immature somatic embryos of white spruce were precultured in 1/20 strength hormone medium for one week then transferred to maturation medium containing 3% sucrose, 20 μ M ABA and adjusted to 290 mmol/kg with PEG (polyethylene glycol). The third week of culture the white spruce somatic embryos were cultured in 3% sucrose, 30 μ M ABA, 10% PEG and 3.32% lactose (Table 5 and col. 26, lines 35-38). At this stage, this may be considered the prematuration step because it is after the proliferation step and before the maturation step and involves the reduction of auxin and cytokinin and/or change in water stress with the addition of ABA (see p. 4 of specification of instant application). The embryogenic culture at this stage should contain early stage embryos. The nutrient medium at the third week in Table 5 has less auxin or cytokinin and has increase ABA. The embryos eventually germinated to produce root and epicotyl elongation (col. 30, lines 7-9).

Attree does not teach that the nutrient medium further comprises of auxin and cytokinin, wherein the prematuration medium contains less auxin and less cytokinin than the maintenance medium.

Handley et al teach a method of regenerating *Pinus taeda* in liquid medium, wherein the initiation (induction) (col. 5, lines 62-64) and maintenance (col. 6, lines 7-9) media contain sugar selected from the group consisting of glucose, maltose (6% see Table 2), sucrose (3% see Table 2), melezitose, and combination thereof and the development (prematuration) (col. 6,

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lines 16-25) medium contains sugar selected from the group consisting of glucose, maltose, sucrose, and combination thereof. The maintenance medium also contains 0.1 to 100 mg/l of auxin and 0.05 to 10 mg/l of cytokinin (col. 6, lines 5-6 and Table II). The prematuration medium further comprises between 5 to 250 mg/l of ABA (col. 6, lines 17-18) and no auxin and cytokinin (Table II). The prematuration medium contains ABA and less auxin and cytokinin than the maintenance medium. At weeks 6, 9 and 12, the embryos were suitable for germination (col. 17, lines 66-67).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to reproduce coniferous somatic embryos wherein the nutrient medium contains lactose and additional sugar as taught by Attree and to modify the prematuration medium containing ABA and no auxin and cytokinin when compared to the maintenance medium containing auxin and cytokinin as taught by Handley. The additional sugars selected were readily metabolized because the embryos developed. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so given that ABA is a growth regulator and auxin and cytokinin is not needed in the prematuration stage. With regard to the amount of lactose in the nutrient medium of less than 2.0%, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use less lactose because Attree disclosed that for embryo development it is preferred that less than 3% of sucrose and equivalent well-metabolizes carbon sources could be used (col. 11, lines 57-60). Thus, less than 2% equivalent well-metabolize carbon source such as lactose is acceptable. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to use less than 2% lactose in the nutrient medium because a minimum of 3% of total carbohydrate in the nutrient medium is necessary for the development of embryos (Attree col. 11, lines 57-60). Thus, the invention as a whole was clearly *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

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10. Claims 50-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fan et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,689,609) in view of Handley et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,491,090).

The claims are drawn to a method of reproducing somatic embryo *Pinus taeda* or hybrid thereof comprising growing an explant in induction, maintenance or prematuration medium, comprising of between 1.0% and 6.0% lactose for the development of the explant to the cotyledon stage suitable for germination.

Fan et al teach a method of nutriming somatic embryos of pines and spruces (Example 4) to produce full-grown plants. The seeds are imbibed in water (initial phase or phase one) then the somatic embryos from the seeds are transferred to nutriming solution for phase two comprising a carbohydrate source such as lactose (col. 10, lines 43-58) at a range of 3-6% (w/v). Phase two is the growth of the zygotic embryos (col. 9, lines 15-17) similar to the maintenance step, wherein the embryos are grown.

Fan et al do not teach that the somatic embryo is *Pinus taeda* or hybrid thereof.

The teachings of Handley et al are discussed above.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the method of reproducing coniferous somatic embryos wherein the nutrient medium comprises of lactose in the maintenance medium as taught by Fan and to modify the method by using *Pinus taeda* as the explant as taught by Handley. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so given that *Pinus taeda* is an important timber crop. Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable expectation of success in the combination of Fan and Handley because if it had worked on other species of pines then it would work for *Pinus taeda*. Thus, the invention as a whole was clearly *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

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11. Claims 55-60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Coke (U.S. Patent No. 5,534,433) in view of Pullman et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,492,174). The rejection is modified from the rejection set forth in the Office action mailed March 5, 2007, due to Applicants' amendment of the claims.

The claims are drawn to a method of reproducing somatic embryo selected from the group consisting of *Pinus radiata*, and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* comprising growing an explant in prematuration medium, comprising of 1.0% or more of galactose-containing sugar and an additional sugar, and developing the explant to obtain a cotyledon stage embryos suitable for germination.

Coke teaches a basal nutrient medium for embryo development (prematuration) of *Pinus taeda* (loblolly pine), wherein two sugars were added to the nutrient medium sucrose (30g/l) and maltose (60 g/l) (col. 6, lines 59-62). After nine weeks of embryo development Coke collected data on the number of cotyledonary stage embryos (col. 7, lines 37-40 and Table VI).

Coke does not teach that the sugar is galactose and that the coniferous somatic embryo is selected from the group consisting of *Pinus radiata* or hybrids thereof and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* or hybrids thereof.

Pullman et al teach a method of initiating embryogenic cultures of *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir) (Example 2), and *Pinus radiata* (col. 7, line 44) (Example 3), wherein the explant is induce in liquid media containing between 5 and 70 g/l of maltose (for example 1.5% see Table 47), glucose, fructose, sucrose (for example 1% - 1.5% see Table 3 and 5), galactose, or combination thereof (col. 9, lines 54-58).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to reproduce coniferous somatic embryos wherein the nutrient medium contains two sugars as taught by Coke and to modify the sugars by using galactose as the primary sugar as

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taught by Pullman and then using sucrose or maltose as the secondary sugar as taught by Coke. Furthermore, Pullman noted that galactose or combination thereof maltose, glucose, fructose, and sucrose are effective carbohydrate energy source (col. 9, lines 54-57). One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so given that sugar is necessary for further development of conifer embryos. Furthermore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have a reasonable expectation of success in the combination of using galactose as the primary sugar and using sucrose or maltose as the secondary sugar, because Pullman states that a combination of sugar could be utilized (col. 9, lines 54-56). Thus, the invention as a whole was clearly *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made.

Conclusion

12. No claims are allowed.

Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to June Hwu whose telephone number is (571) 272-0977. The Examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Anne Marie Grunberg, can be reached on (571) 272-0975. The fax number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


ANNE KUBELIX, PH.D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER